E 185
.93
.P41 F8

Friends, Society of, Philadelphia

AN

EPISTLE

FROM THE

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

HELD

IN PHILADELPHIA,

By adjournments from the 9th day of the 4th month to the 14th of the same, inclusive, 1832,

TO THE

PEOPLE OF COLOUR

RESIDING IN PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, AND PARTS ADJACENT.

PHILADELPHIA:
Printed by J. Richards, 13 Church Alley.

1832.

E185
93
.P41F8

Gift
W. L. Shoemaker
7 $ '06

20-2065

EPISTLE

FROM THE

YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS,

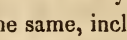
HELD IN PHILADELPHIA,

By adjournments from the 9th day of the 4th month to the 14th of the same, inclusive, 1832,

TO THE

PEOPLE OF COLOUR

RESIDING IN PENNSYLVANIA, &c.



It is with feelings of brotherly and Christian sympathy, that we are engaged to address you at this time, to encourage you to bear up under the difficulties and trials which surround you.

Our forefathers took a deep interest in the afflictions of your forefathers: they laboured faithfully in pleading their cause, and often stood forth as mouth for the dumb. The same feeling remains among us who are their

descendants. It has solemnly spread over this meeting at this time, and under its influence we now address you.

Although dangers may threaten, and dark clouds may hang over you, and you may feel great discouragements, especially in perceiving a disposition in some to pass oppressive laws against you—when you look as on the right hand, you may fear there is none to help, and on the left, there is none to uphold,—yet remember that the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, even than the raging waves of the sea; and if you are steadily concerned to walk before Him in innocency and uprightness of heart, he will be to you a never failing friend and helper in the time of your distress.

We earnestly desire that you may be increasingly concerned, that your lives and conversation among men may be such as become the professors of the name of Christ; ever bearing in mind, that the blessed Saviour was a perfect example of meekness, gentleness, and patience, under trial and deep suffering. When he was spit upon and reviled, he reviled not again, but returned blessing for cursing. He

was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And so far from being among the rich and the great of this world, he declared of himself, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head."

It has been cause of great comfort to us to be informed, that among the people of colour residing in Philadelphia and its neighbourhood, a large number are conducting in a manner highly satisfactory to their friends. We find that many of you are industriously and honestly engaged in different callings, are bringing up your families with reputation, and are giving a good education to your children. We also learn, that by the formation of numerous societies among yourselves, for mutual assistance in times of sickness and distress, you extend aid to each other; and hence prevent many from becoming a burden to the public.

To such of you, especially, as are parents, we desire to hold forth encouragement to persevere in giving useful learning to your children to fit them for business. And may you be careful, by precept and example, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Ask counsel of Him to show you how

to go in and out before your tender offspring, so that you may be enabled to raise them up in all godliness and honesty—that they may become respectable and useful members of the community, and may prove a comfort to your declining years.

To your children and youth, we feel engaged to offer a word of tender counsel. We would say to them, "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth." Honour your fathers and mothers. Cultivate love and kindness to each other in your families. Keep strictly to truth, honesty, and sobriety. Be respectful and courteous in your deportment. Be industrious,—remembering that now while you are young is the all-important time to obtain useful learning, and for the formation of sound principles and correct habits. Thus as you become obedient children of the Lord, and of your parents, the Divine blessing will descend upon you.

And now, with another class we are engaged to expostulate, and to plead with them on behalf of their own souls. To you who give way to temptation, and lead an evil course of life—Oh! that we could availingly entreat you,

M E 1 0 3.

solemnly to pause —to consider your ways, and be wise. Experience must have shown you that "the way of the transgressor is hard." Look around upon your sober and exemplary neighbours,—see the comfort and happiness which they enjoy,—compare their peaceful homes with the vice and misery to be seen in yours! And further remember, that unless you are favoured to experience repentance and amendment of life, an awful judgment will await you in the world to come! While your reproachful conduct is cause of deep distress to your best friends, it gives occasion to those who are watching over you for evil, to tell them that the People of Colour are not fit to be free men and women. It grieves the hearts of your innocent and sober neighbours of your own colour, who have sorely to feel the effects of your evil conduct; and it has a tendency to rivet the fetters more strongly on your afflicted brethren and sisters who are still groaning in bondage. Return, then, we entreat you;—repent, and live in a sober, honest, orderly, and exemplary manner.

Finally, we desire to encourage all to put their trust and confidence in our Heavenly Father, who sleeps not by day, nor slumbers

by night; but who numbers the very hairs of our heads.

May you remember, that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save—nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but, for the cries of the poor and the afflicted, he will arise with healing in his wings. Righteousness will yet overspread the nations, and the prediction of the holy prophet will assuredly be fulfilled: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Then indeed the cry of the oppressed shall cease—the now bleeding Ethiopia, shall availingly stretch out her hands unto God, and that glorious day will arrive when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Signed by direction and on behalf of the Meeting, by

JOHN COMLY,
Clerk of the Men's Meeting.
DEBORAH F. WHARTON,
Clerk of the Women's Meeting.

DOBBS
LIBRARY BI
FEB 74
ST. AUGUSTINE
FLA.
32084

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 011 529 935 9